

CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS IN S.A.

A GENERAL VIEW of the records of the consumption of Alcoholic Liquors shows that during the six years, 1914-15 to 1920-21, the Drink Bill of the State nearly doubled, this being due to the substantial increases in prices, while during that period the quantity consumed per inhabitant and the convictions for drunkenness per 1,000 of population fell considerably. From 1920-21 to 1926-27, the value consumed per head increased only slightly, while there had been a steady increase in the convictions. For the year 1927-28, decreases are noted in quantity and Value consumed and the convictions for drunkenness.

VALUES. For the year ended June 30th 1928, the alcoholic drink bill of the State was estimated to be not less than £2,932,627 or £5.1.10 per inhabitant, compared with £3,096,470 or £5.9.4 per inhabitant for the previous year and £1,326,185 or £2.19.2 per inhabitant in 1914-15. The 1927-28 drink bill per inhabitant was the lowest for any year since 1919-20.

QUANTITIES. The four years prior to 1924-25 had indicated continuous increase in the quantity of spirits consumed per inhabitant which had been counterbalanced by a continual decrease in the quantity of beer consumed, and this appears to also have been the experience of the Commonwealth as a whole. This however, was reversed from 1924-25 to 1926-27, and for 1927-28 there was a decrease in both spirits and beer, giving the lowest since the particulars were first recorded in 1914-15. The quantities consumed per inhabitant for 1927-28, 1926-27 figures being in parenthesis, were - Beer 10.59 (11.27) gallons, Spirits .28 (32) proof gallons, compared with the year 1914-15 - Beer 12.10 gallons, Spirits .42 proof gallons. The total quantities consumed were Beer 100,223 (6,382,982) gallons, Spirits 163,218 (178,856) proof gallons. The consumption of wine had been estimated each year at .75 gallons per inhabitant.

CONVICTIONS FOR DRUNKENNESS. During the year 1927 there were 5,913 (6,029) convictions for drunkenness averaging 10.35 (10.79) convictions per 1,000 inhabitants. This is lower than 1926 and 1925, but still higher than any year between then and 1914, when there were 243 convictions averaging 11.77 per 1,000 inhabitants. These convictions include several against the same person. Distinct persons convicted were 4,681 (4,504) average 8.20 (8.06) compared with the pre-war year 1914 4,073, average 9.14.

NET REVENUE. From Customs and Excise Duties in the State for Alcoholic Beverages is given as £1,031,421 (£1,189,409), (decrease 57,988).

Summarised, the following are the principal details:-

Year	Drink Bill		Gallons per Inhabitant Consumed		Year	Drunkenness	
	Total	Per Inhabitant	Beer	Spirits		Convictions	Per 1,000 Inhab.
	£	s. d.	Galls.	Pf. Galls.		No.	No.
14-15	1,326,185	2. 19. 2	12.10	.42	1914	5,243	11.77
20-21	2,545,370	5. 3. 8	12.29	.28	1920	3,448	7.08
25-26	2,978,409	5. 7. 11	10.73	.34	1925	5,795	10.65
26-27	3,096,470	5. 9. 4	11.27	.32	1926	6,029	10.79
27-28	2,932,627	5. 1. 10	10.59	.28	1927	5,913	10.35
War's Increase	163,843	7. 6	.68	.04	-	116	.44